



Citizens' Climate Lobby

Making a Supporting Ask

An ask is just what it sounds like: asking a member of Congress (MOC) to do something you want. This document goes over our primary ask, which we want to be brought up in all lobby meetings. It also offers a menu of secondary bills that are complementary to the Energy Innovation Act that can be a supporting ask and could provide stepping stones to gaining support for our primary ask.

Primary Ask

CCL's primary ask of Representatives is: **to cosponsor the bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (HR 763).**

CCL's primary ask of Senators is: **Make climate a bridge issue, not a wedge issue.** This ask can lead directly into a discussion about how the best way to do that is to cosponsor the bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, when it is reintroduced in the Senate.

The primary ask should be made in every meeting, unless your member is already a cosponsor of the bill.*

If your member of Congress agrees to cosponsor during your lobby meeting, they will know what to do to take that step (i.e. contact the Deutch office). If they agree to cosponsor or expresses significant interest in sponsoring, please inform our CCL legislative staff by emailing danny@citizensclimate.org.

*If your member is already a cosponsor, then focus on thanking them, finding out what support they could use in the district for this action, and perhaps how they could help recruit other sponsors or support the bill publicly. This [one-page guide on working with existing cosponsors](#) provides more recommendations.

Supporting Asks

What is a supporting ask?

You should always be clear that what you want is our primary ask. However, many members of Congress may not be ready to support the Energy Innovation Act (or are already cosponsors). Previous meetings with the office will give you a good idea of what answer you will get to this main ask. Getting legislation passed is a complicated, coalition-building process in which lots of smaller steps must happen before we get a law, especially for a major bill like the Energy Innovation Act. Many members of Congress may be willing to support other bills that fit into the broader picture of addressing the climate crisis and are complementary to the Energy Innovation Act, and these could be stepping stones towards support for our bill.

Bills supporting bipartisan climate action

CCL has identified four bipartisan bills that have been introduced this Congress that could be useful supporting asks. Our primary objective in promoting these bills is to encourage bipartisanship on climate in Congress. These bills are complementary to the Energy Innovation Act and address policy issues that a carbon price does not. **CCL is not formally endorsing these bills but believes they are worthwhile for members of Congress to consider and will move the needle in the right direction.** Descriptions of each bill are in the attachment below. Just click on the .pdf file or blue buttons for more information.

This list is not exhaustive, and if there is a bill your group would like to use as a supporting ask that is not on this list, please contact CCL's Sr. Director of Government Affairs, Ben Pendergrass, at ben@citizensclimate.org. You should use your best judgment when deciding whether you want to make one or more of these bills a supporting ask. If any of them are a source of conflict within your group, pick a different supporting ask.

If you wish to ask your member of Congress to support any of these bills, you and your group should do the research on your own and be prepared to answer any questions that might come up without input from CCL staff. Lobby teams for the DC lobby day should **not** use this supporting ask without input and agreement from the liaison and local group(s).

Other Supporting Asks

If you have been working on other supporting asks, such as holding a bipartisan briefing on local climate impacts, doing a site visit, or holding a public forum in the district, it is fine to continue with those.

House Climate Solutions Caucus

Appropriate for any member in the House. Ask your Representative to join the House Climate Solutions Caucus and to reach out to a colleague across the aisle to join with them. Interested Republican offices should speak with Corey Schrodtt (Corey.Schrodtt@mail.house.gov) in Congressman Rooney's office if they have questions. Interested Democrats should speak to Josh Lipman (Josh.Lipman@mail.house.gov) in the office of co-chair Ted Deutch if they have questions.

Senate Climate Solutions Caucus

CCL is asking you **not** to ask your Senators to join the Senate Climate Solutions Caucus at this time as the current members prefer to keep this as a small caucus. It is great to let your Senator know that it exists and that you are excited about Senators working together to make climate a bridge issue.

The [Senate Climate Solutions Caucus \(more info\)](#) was formed in 2019 by Senator Michael Braun (R-IN) and Senator Chris Coons (D-DE). As the only bipartisan caucus focused on climate change, the Senate Climate Solutions Caucus plays an important role in the Republican-held Senate. The Senate Climate Solutions Caucus is designed to be a small and active working group, focused on solutions.

Legislation of Interest for Supporting Asks in 2019

Utilizing Significant Emissions with Innovative Technologies (USE IT) Act

(House and Senate ask)

Lead Senate Sponsors: Sen. Barrasso (R-WY), Sen. Whitehouse (D-RI)

Lead House Sponsors: Rep. Peters (D-CA-52), Rep. McKinley (R-WV-1)

Senate Cosponsors: Total 16, Democrats 9, Republicans 7

House Cosponsors: Total 37, Democrats 23, Republicans 14

Bill Number: S.383, introduced 2/07/2019 and H.R. 1166, Introduced 2/13/2019

Bill Status: Passed Senate as part of National Defense Authorization Act

Bill Text: [congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/383/text](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/383/text) (Senate)

[congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1166/text](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1166/text) (House)

One pager (for Congressional offices): [USE IT Act](#)

Bill Summary: The USE IT Act is a bipartisan, bicameral bill that supports the development and demonstration of vital carbon capture and removal technologies. Carbon capture and sequestration refers to technologies that capture and sequester CO₂ from such emitting sources as biomass or fossil fuel power plants. Emerging direct-air capture technologies remove CO₂ emissions from the atmosphere and store the CO₂ or turn it into usable materials and products, and fuels. This bill authorizes \$35 million in competitive prize funding for direct air capture technologies and allocates \$50 million toward research and development of technologies that transform captured carbon dioxide into commercial products. The USE IT Act also facilitates the construction and development of carbon capture, utilization and sequestration (CCUS) infrastructure projects.

How it Complements the Energy Innovation Act

Scrubbing CO₂ out of industrial emissions is already used industrially but has not been practiced widely for environmental reasons because there is currently no financial reward for doing so. Both the Energy Innovation Act and USE IT Act will change that. The Energy Innovation Act provides a rebate of the carbon fee to qualified facilities that permanently and safely capture and sequester carbon. However, the Energy Innovation Act does not address direct air capture technology, which the USE IT Act does. Direct air capture would complement the Energy Innovation Act's goal of cutting emissions while facilitating an orderly transition away from fossil energy. Many studies including the recent IPCC special report on a 1.5°C world, the Deep Decarbonization Pathways Project, and the World Bank, consider CCUS as one of the technology options likely to be a potential route to decarbonization.

Although it passed the Senate as part of a defense bill, this remains a good ask in both the Senate and the House.

Restoring Resilient Reefs Act of 2019

(House and Senate ask)

Lead Senate Sponsors: Sen. Rubio (R-FL), Sen. Schatz (D-HI), Sen. Scott (R-FL), Sen. Hirono (D-HI)

Lead House Sponsors: Rep. Soto (D-FL-9), Rep. Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR)

Senate Cosponsors: Total 4, Democrats 2, Republicans 2

House Cosponsors: Total 11, Democrats 7, Republicans 4

Bill Number: S. 2429, Introduced 8/1/2019. H.R.4160, Introduced 8/2/2019

Bill Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/2429/text> (Senate)
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/4160/text> (House)

One pager (for Congressional offices): [Restoring Resilient Reefs Act of 2019](#)

Bill Summary: The bipartisan Restoring Resilient Reefs Act would revive and modernize the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, fifteen years after its expiration. It would institute 5-year authorization with an explicit focus on restoration activities where natural disasters and human activities have degraded reef ecosystems. Also included are federal funding and technical assistance to states and impacted communities; overlapping federal, state, and local planning responsibilities for better collaboration; enhanced assessment and reporting procedures; and new avenues for the provision of emergency funds to ensure rapid and effective responses to coral reef emergencies. The bill also codifies and updates the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force previously established by Executive Order under President Clinton.

How it Complements the Energy Innovation Act

The Energy Innovation Act will directly mitigate the cause of ocean acidification and warming; two of the driving forces behind coral reef degradation. However, even if we begin robustly drawing down emissions now, we will still have to deal with the impacts a warming earth has had on coral reefs. The Restoring Resilient Reefs Act will position local, state, and federal governments to efficiently and effectively handle these impacts.

Disclosing Aid Spent to Ensure Relief (DISASTER) Act

(Senate ask)

Lead Sponsors: Rep. Peters (D-CA-52), Rep. Meadows (R-NC-11)

Cosponsors: Total 13, 9 Democrats, 4 Republicans

Bill Number: H.R. 1984, Introduced 3/28/2019

Bill Status: Passed House 07/25/2019

Bill Text: congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1984/text

One pager (for Congressional offices): [DISASTER Act](#)

Bill Summary: The DISASTER Act requires the Office of Management and Budget to submit an annual report to Congress on the amount of disaster-related spending by the federal government. The report must include all federal obligations related to disaster response, recovery, mitigation efforts, and administrative costs associated with these activities for specified agencies and programs.

Since this bill has passed the House this is a good ask for Senate offices.

How it Complements the Energy Innovation Act

According to a 2016 government report, every metric ton of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted now will cost tomorrow's economy from \$12 to \$120, and that cost could double by 2050. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports the number of severe weather events that inflict at least \$1 billion in damage (adjusted for inflation) has risen from an average of two per year in the 1980s to more than ten per year since 2010. It is vital for Congress to have the most comprehensive data for the total cost of responding to natural disasters, when they are making a decision regarding climate policy. Additionally, such data will only build the case for the need for action like passing the Energy Innovation Act.

Revitalizing the Economy of Coal Communities by Leveraging Local Activities and Investing More (RECLAIM) Act of 2019

(House and Senate ask)

Lead House Sponsors: Rep. Cartwright (D-PA), Rep. Rogers (R-KY)

Lead Senate Sponsor: Joe Manchin (D-WV)

Cosponsors House: Total 61, 47 Democrats, 14 Republicans

Cosponsors Senate: Total 6 Democrats

Bill Number: H.R. 2156, Introduced 4/09/2019 and S. 1232, Introduced 4/09/2019

Bill Text: [congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2156/text](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2156/text) (House),

[congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1232/text](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1232/text) (Senate)

One pager (for Congressional offices): [RECLAIM Act](#)

Bill Summary: This bill amends the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) to make specified funds from the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) fund available to the Department of the Interior for distribution to states and Indian tribes to promote economic revitalization, diversification, and development in economically distressed communities through the reclamation and restoration of land and water resources adversely affected by coal mining carried out before August 3, 1977. The bill prescribes requirements for projects to reclaim abandoned mine lands and waters that are likely to create favorable conditions for the economic development of the project site or promote the general welfare through economic and community. These projects shall be located in a community affected by a recent decline in mining. The bill also increases the minimum amount of funds that Interior must provide annually to states and Indian tribes for reclamation and restoration projects.

How it Complements the Energy Innovation Act

Implementation of the Energy Innovation Act will see a rapid decline in the use of coal as a source of energy. This decline is already happening due to more competitive and lower emissions energy sources being widely adopted. This is and will continue to have a negative impact on communities that coal has been a major part of their economies. The RECLAIM Act will help these communities revitalize and diversify their economies.

Better Energy Storage Technology (BEST) Act

(House and Senate ask)

Lead House Sponsors: Rep. Bill Foster, (D-IL), Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, (R-WA)

Lead Senate Sponsor: Sen. Collins, Susan M. (R-ME), Sen. Heinrich, Martin (D-NM)

Cosponsors House: Total 17, 8 Democrats, 9 Republicans

Cosponsors Senate: Total 19, 14 Democrats, 5 Republicans

Bill Number: H.R.2986, Introduced 4/09/2019 and S. 1602, Introduced 09/25/2019

Bill Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1602/text>

One pager (for Congressional offices): [BEST Act](#)

Bill Summary: This bipartisan bill authorizes \$300 million over five years (by 2023) to reduce the cost of grid-scale energy storage systems. One of the biggest impediments to greater use of grid-scale energy storage is cost. The bill aims to increase the affordability of storage by directing the DOE to pursue a strategic plan through demonstration projects and implementing cost targets. Our nation's electricity system is intricate and has a vast assortment of entities involved in its functionality. Therefore in order to accomplish the desired energy storage innovation on a grid-scale this bill instructs the DOE Secretary to construct a 10-year strategic plan for a program that would coordinate and resource federal agencies, national labs, and private industries to advanced storage technologies that can provide days, even months, of capacity.

How it Complements the Energy Innovation Act

The need for grid-scale energy storage systems is one of the major roadblocks to more widespread adoption and utilization of emissions free energy like wind and solar by utilities. The Energy Innovation Act would create a market incentive for utilities to make that shift, however there will still need to be action by federal agencies, and the national labs to prioritize and fund R&D new grid level storage technology.

(Revised 10/14/19)